

Future Strategies

Principles of Collective Union Organising

Policy

ACTU CONGRESS 2003

1. Congress recognises that unity amongst unions is a critical precondition to gaining the trust and confidence of members and potential members. For this reason Congress resolves that unions must respect and apply the following principles where a collective organising effort is undertaken between unions at a workplace or industry level.
2. Congress resolves to adopt this approach because:
 - (a) in joint organising efforts unions have a responsibility both to the workers involved, and to the other unions, to adhere to a collective strategy and behave in an ethical manner;
 - (b) unions must resist attempts by the employer(s) to defeat the organising strategy by dividing the unions by any means, including offering preferential treatment to one union; and
 - (c) judgements about changes in tactics must be taken collectively, in consultation with the workers.
3. The ACTU will encourage unions to reach agreement about the organisational and industrial strategies which will be developed and implemented in particular industries and workplaces. The agreements should contain a dispute resolution process involving reference to the ACTU.
4. These agreements upon strategy should be recorded in writing, have the support of the workers involved, and be endorsed by the relevant decision making process of each union. Where it is considered appropriate, the agreement will be submitted to the ACTU Executive for endorsement.
5. Congress resolves that the ACTU will assist in the making of such agreements, and will support the agreements once made and will work for their full implementation.
6. Where a dispute between the unions arises the ACTU will:

- (a) work to ensure that the disputes resolution process is adhered to;
 - (b) broker discussions between the unions;
 - (c) make recommendations to resolve the issues; and
 - (d) not support the actions of any union which contradicts or destabilises the agreed approach.
7. The ACTU, in circumstances where a union refuses to accept the outcome of the above processes, may make submissions in industrial tribunals or other forums in order to uphold the integrity of the initially agreed approach.
8. In a case where it is clear that a union has repudiated an agreement and is taking action on its own behalf which is damaging to the collective interests of the trade union movement, the issue will be referred to the ACTU Executive which will consider all available options for achieving collective discipline.